



THE TOWERS

201 S. Main St., West Milton, Ohio 45383

February 2022



A WORD FROM OUR PASTOR

Wanting a Sign from Heaven

Mark 8:11 The Pharisees came and began to question Jesus. To test him, they asked him for a sign from heaven

At times I identify with the pharisees more than I would like. I think I have told you that before. We certainly are familiar with Jesus' warnings, and how at least some or many pharisees had worldly desires and temptations around money and ego and power. Despite that, I try to consider the noble reasons for the various ways they challenged Jesus. In the Book of Acts we can read of the pharisees talking about those before Jesus who had led uprisings. Some of them presented themselves as Messiah type figures, but when they died the movement ended. This is worth remembering whenever we think the pharisees were being too difficult with Jesus. They had experience and history with people claiming to speak and act on behalf of God, but who didn't. In a way, pharisees may have seen their work as protecting the Church from those who would harm it.

The United Methodist Church is among the most difficult of the denominations to be ordained within. It includes a Masters of Divinity degree, but the education is only part of the requirement. One could be several thousands in debt for schooling, and then be turned down for ordination (and have a degree that is not very useful in the secular world).

As you receive this, I am in the midst of work for the West Ohio Conference Board of Ordained Ministry. Candidates for ordination have been studying, writing and preparing for this event for several months, and the interviews "this" weekend will determine whether they approved to enter provisional years of ordination, or are being fully ordained...or are being told not yet, or no. These candidates, by the way, are either full time students, or are serving churches...or are doing both. This year we again have candidates and conversations we will have to have virtually, which is much less than ideal. If I'm honest, like the passage that introduces this note, I admit I sometimes am looking for a sign from heaven...and virtual connections are not ideal for that. I don't want to say "yes" only because someone is slick has a ready answer for every theological question we ask. We want to be able to challenge them, and in the midst of that we hope to see God at work within their writings and their individual verbal responses. Am I the only one who thinks this sounds a little like what the

pharisees were doing? I yearn for a "sign from heaven" that almost never happens. The clouds don't part, and doves don't descend upon the candidate...though in the zoom meetings you would think one of them would be enterprising enough to think to add it in as a filter, like cat ears. ☺

The questions we raise usually come from the candidate writings from Wesley's historic questions or their theological reflections on light topics such as "the problem of evil," seeing God at work in the sacraments, and other page turners. We look for questions that will allow them to shine, but we also look for questions that will force extra thought. The unspoken challenge of all this is the human effort. We have turned down candidates for treating this step as if it is merely a "hoop" to pass through. If a candidate works hard in school and on the paperwork, she or he could be well on the way to being ordained, and yet a crucial element of ordination is the Church recognizing and affirming God's call on that person's life, which this interview process is to help affirm. I have no doubt that there have been women and men ordained who have not been called by God, and I have no doubt there are those called by God who have been turned down for ordination.

Yes, I sometimes identify with the pharisees. Sometimes I find myself trying to protect the Church while also trying to glimpse a sign from heaven that the protection isn't necessary. I want to believe there is certain nobility to wanting to protect it, but I don't want to turn into a pharisee getting in the way of God's work. After all, it is the Divine that elevates the Church, not the flawed humanity who fills it. I realize there is always hard work on our end, but I'm also reminding myself that the heaviest lifting is accomplished by the One we Worship and Serve, and I need to lean on that strength more than I do. Maybe there is someone else who needs that reminder today, too. I covet your prayers as we examine candidates who are stepping into leadership at one of the most uncertain of times in American Christianity, and as our congregation struggles to stay both connected and healthy. While reading and writing with only a mild cough, I am, In His service and yours,



Board Meeting Highlights

Devotions

Devotions were offered by Katie. She shared from Luke 1:38 asking, Would I have been willing to do what Mary did? Let us all be servants like Mary. The meeting was opened with a prayer by Katie.

Meeting Attendees

Dick Martens, Katie Poling, Carol Storer, David Jay, Julia Circle, Jill Circle, John Ankerman, Patti Wion, Janet Benkert, Chris Long and Pastor Robbie Scott

Mission and Ministry

Jim Mitchell shared a report from the Legal Forum. Topics highlighted/discussed include:

- Non-offering plate revenue tax-exempt status (eg Grandma's Kitchen)
- Agreements for use of the building
- Safe Sanctuary
- Boy Scout Claims- Trust division is representing all churches

Pastor's Report

Overall attendance 125 for November. Average attendance for 9 am: 48.75 (in person) and 16.5 (online); 11:15 am: 50.25 (in person) and 12(online). Plans for a preaching series on prayer, following the familiar acrostic A.C.T.S. Discussion was held and approved considering the special offering for the Christmas Eve service. The Milton Union Council of Churches is collecting funds to support a young woman from our community, Jessica Brown. She has been accepted into a trial program for a procedure that will improve her physical condition following a car accident that left her paralyzed.

Trustees

Trustees report was shared. The Stained Glass project work is scheduled to resume and be completed beginning in January. Currently, 78% of stained glass cost has been raised through donations. South Tower has final work planned. Trustees reviewed the current "Rental Agreement" with these suggestions:

- basement capacity reduced to 75
- activity center/kitchen rental costs to increase including Joann's discretion to increase cost for groups with >8 hours of use or > 50 people.

Further discussion will be held regarding insurance agreements

Finance

The finance report for November was reviewed and accepted. Weeks of Operations equal to 7.56 weeks. The year-end projection could be 2500 over budget.

Nominations

No report

Staff Parish Relations

Information has been transferred to new committee chairs

Upcoming Events

Dec 26 Single Worship service 10:30 am

Jan 23 Pulpit fill Tim Benkert

Jan 30-Feb 2 Pastor Robbie, West Ohio Board of Ordained Ministry responsibilities

Serving Schedule

Feb 06th

9:00 Liturgist: Mike C.

Greeters: Wendy H. and Nancy L.

Ushers: Wayne & Susie S. and Phil & Karen M.

Hospitality Table: Tom & Janet W.

Nursery: 10:15 Patti W. & Jenna M. / **11:15** Julia C. & Wendy H.

11:15 Greeters: Ben G., Julia C., & Kathy K.

Scripture Reader: Andrew C.

Feb 13th

9:00 Liturgist: Wendy H.

Greeters: Elaine P. and Joy P.

Ushers:

Hospitality Table: Nancy S. & Kathy K.

Nursery: 10:15 Lesli R. & Kat G. / **11:15** Lesli R. & Lauren E.

11:15 Greeters: Dick & Mary Ann M.

Scripture Reader: Julia C.

Feb 20th

9:00 Liturgist: Mike C.

Greeters: Elaine I. and Cathy B.

Ushers:

Hospitality Table: Carol S.

Nursery: 10:15 Julia C. & Kathy K. / **11:15** Ben G. & Jenna M.

11:15 Greeters: Kathy W. and Ruth L.

Scripture Reader: Norman H.

Feb 27th

9:00 Liturgist: Les T.

Greeters: Carol S. and Peggy N.

Ushers:

Hospitality Table: Sharon T.

Nursery: 10:15 Jennifer K. & Jill C. / **11:15** Jennifer K. & Kim D.

11:15 Greeters: Paul & Sally M. and Marijo S.

Scripture Reader: Beth T.

**Happy Birthday & Happy Anniversary
February 2022**

1st - Tim & Lisa Wright (39 yrs)
2nd - Bret Beard
5th - Leah Blackburn
9th - Danielle Sweitzer
10th - Darin Wion
12th - Lincoln Moran
14th - Bret & Teesha Beard (29 yrs)
15th - Grace Knostman
16th - Steve Kraus
Nancy Studebaker
17th - Janet Balsbaugh
Rose Knostman



19th - Marcia Smith
Lester Trittschuh
20th - Ansel Circle
Terry & Wendy Long (40 yrs)
21st - Silas Raines
22nd - Wayne & Susie Spitler (58 yrs)
23rd - Janet Benkert
24th - Olivia Bryson
25th - Nancy Lightcap
26th - Lydia Garrett
Jenna Moran
28th - Terry Long

Weekly Giving and Attendance Statistics

Date	12-26-21 - 12-31-21	01-02-22	01-09-22	01-16-22
General Offering	3047.00	4288.00	5486.00	2494.00
Weekly Budget Need	4854.00	4793.00	4793.00	4793.00
Mission Offering	2200.00	295.00	150.00	240.00
Maintenance Fund	465.00	200.00	305.00	135.00
Building Fund & Memorials	820.00	310.00	450.00	303.00
Stained Glass Windows	1040.00	145.00	.00	2000.00
Online & Physical Attendance				
9 a.m. Service at church	59	34	36	26
* Remote viewing	22	25	35	34
11:15 a.m. Service at church	-	51	37	33
* Remote viewing	-	2	8	15
Total Attendance	81	112	116	108



* 'remote viewing' is only recorded for those signing in during the live broadcast, and does not include those who watch from the links after the live broadcast is over. This estimate does not include all who are watching.

People to remember in prayer:

Hoffman Sympathies: to the family of Ruth Hayes as she passed away on January 21, 2021

At Home: Phil Blue, Nan Guthrie, Valaria Harshbarger, Wilma Hoover, Helen Keller, Theda Klepinger, Winston Klepinger, Freda Koeller, Mary Maess, Dick & Eugenie Markley, Jennie McNeal, Dixie Porter, Janice Turner, Jim & Kathy Watkins, Monica Winemiller, and Nancy Wolf

At Centers: Dorothy Ginn, Cypress Pointe, 600 W. National Rd. Rm 312, Englewood OH 45322
Sherynne King, Koester Pavilion, 3232 N Co. Rd 25A, Rm 29, Troy OH 45373
Miriam Miller, Brookdale of Troy, 81 S Stanfield Rd., Rm 108, Troy OH 45373
Wendy Long, Trinity Center, 789 Stonybrook, Rm 208A, Fairborn OH 45324
Joetta Perry, Storypoint Troy, 1840 Towne Park Drive, Rm 17, Troy OH 45373
Monica Winemiller, Koester Pavillion, 3232 N Co Rd 25A Rm 74, Troy OH 45373



Thank you all for the prayers you prayed for me from my stent surgery. It meant so very much to me. God Bless! With Love,
Janet Balsbaugh



Stained Glass Window Restoration Project
Amount Received: \$ 89,245
Total Project Goal : \$ 109,430
Thank You!

"Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and
you will be saved." Acts 16:31



Valentine's Family Fun Night
Saturday, February 12
5:30-8PM in Activity Center
Tacos, Dessert, Board Games and a Nerf Gun War
Check your email for a sign-up link

Please write this date down
2022 VBS Rocky Railway
June 26- June 30, 2022

Traditional Service
9AM

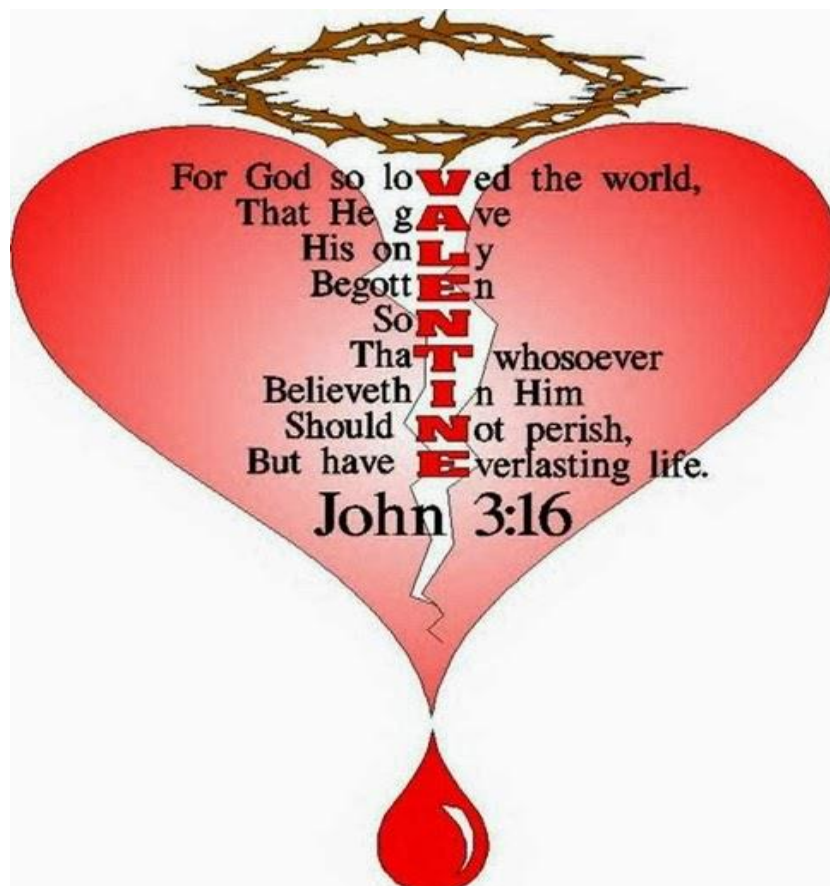
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Sunday School Hour
10:15-11:10AM

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Open Door Service
11:15AM

Children's Director: Becky Garrett
ragarrett15@gmail.com
937-524-7220



Hoffman United Methodist Endowment Fund
January 10, 2022

In December 2021 we had a member of the church contribute a very nice donation to our Endowment Fund. So first of all we would like to thank that person for their recent gift as well as other members who have made similar donations in the past.

As a background, it was several years ago (2015) we unexpectedly received a donation from the estate of Robert & Anne Ullery. At that time we established this Fund for people who would like to make a donation or to create a legacy donation to the church in the future.

“...The Church Board established the Endowment Fund with the hope of it helping with the “Next” Dream of Hoffman UMC... If we have a dream in the future, we want to shorten the wait for stepping into that dream as much as we can. In order for us to be looking forward we needed to set aside funds we would only use to move our larger mission forward, and protect ourselves from using them for the electric bill, just as we do in our own households when we have a larger dream...”

(From the Hoffman United Methodist Endowment Fund brochure.)

Over the years since establishing the Fund, some of the money has been used for many improvements to our aging facility. Most recently money was used for partially funding expenses for the tower remodeling, new furnace/boiler & stained-glass windows repair.

Some people are able to donate to the Fund beyond their normal giving and some may want to use this as an opportunity to manage their retirement funds. Most recently I’ve been hearing about the RMD (Required Minimum Distribution) from your IRA for people over 70 ½ (if born before 7/1/1949 or 72 years old if born after 6/30/1949), where they can withdraw from their retirement accounts and have their funds sent directly to the church. The benefit of this is you are bypassing income from the withdrawal and the related taxes. This is something that you would want to discuss with your financial or tax adviser.

If you would like to direct money to this Fund (Minimum of \$1,000) just write your check or have your investment firm write a check from your retirement account to the church and indicate in the memo line that it is for Hoffman UMC’s Endowment Fund.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at any time.

John Ankerman, Finance Chairman
cell 937 478 2078

Robbie Scott, Pastor
937 698 4401

For questions regarding stained-glass window restoration, please call.
David Jay, Trustee Treasurer
937 698 6412

HOFFMAN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 2021 FINANCE REPORT

General Budget and Missions Budget

December 31, 2021

			MONTH	YEAR-TO-DATE	
1010	First Sunday		6,732.00	62,961.04	
1020	Second Sunday		6,387.00	61,699.09	
1030	Third Sunday		6,564.00	52,924.00	
1040	Fourth Sunday		3,047.00	41,863.01	
1050	Fifth Sunday		0.00	13,390.00	
Total Regular Offering			22,730.00	232,837.14	
1060	Misc. Income		25.00	1,527.00	
**Total Income			22,755.00	234,364.14	
		BUDGET FOR YEAR	PAID OUT THIS MONTH	YEAR-TO-DATE PAID OUT	BALANCE OF BUDGET
1	Conference Apportionments	18,547.00	1,545.00	18,547.00	0.00
2	District Adm. Apportionments	2,693.00	224.00	2,693.00	0.00
Total Local Apportionments		21,240.00	1,769.00	21,240.00	0.00
3	Hospitality	200.00	30.06	0.00	200.00
4	Outreach	250.00	0.00	78.29	171.71
5	Worship	1,000.00	165.88	821.43	178.57
6	Music	750.00	143.96	822.73	(72.73)
7	Media Subscriptions	2,000.00	94.97	2,260.78	(260.78)
8	Assimilation	50.00	0.00	0.00	50.00
9	Kids Hope	500.00	0.00	0.00	500.00
10	Youth Ministry	500.00	0.00	0.00	500.00
Total Council of Ministries		5,250.00	434.87	4,013.29	1,266.77
OFFICE SUPPLY & FINANCE					
11	Finance & Stewardship	900.00	0.00	410.15	489.85
12	Office Supplies & Postage	4,000.00	1,044.29	3,684.38	315.62
Total Administrative & Other Minist		4,900.00	1,044.29	4,094.53	805.47
13	Pastor Parish	250.00	0.00	0.00	250.00
14	Staff Salary	122,740.51	9,085.44	117,735.72	5,004.79
15	Health Ins. & Pension	39,321.30	3,330.21	39,382.08	(60.78)
16	Acct. Reimbursement-Pastor	4,000.00	1,510.62	3,026.70	973.30
17	Hoffman Family Benevolence	300.00	0.00	0.00	300.00
18	Pulpit Supply	500.00	100.00	400.00	100.00
19	Employer Payroll Taxes	6,121.12	461.47	5,510.96	610.16
20	Moving Allowance	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00	0.00
21	Lakeside Conf Delegate	550.00	0.00	0.00	550.00
Total Staff & Parish Relations		174,782.93	14,487.74	167,055.46	7,727.47
22	Maintenance	1,500.00	185.78	1,270.41	229.59
23	Utilities	31,092.00	1,815.92	20,537.16	10,554.84
24	Building Insurance	4,868.00	0.00	4,923.00	(55.00)
25	Real Estate Taxes Parsonage	2,980.00	0.00	2,960.82	19.18
26	Snow Plowing & Yard Work	4,800.00	0.00	5,219.50	(419.50)
27	Supplies	1,000.00	222.11	587.24	412.76
Total Trustees		46,240.00	2,223.81	35,498.13	10,741.87
**Total General Budgeted Expenses		252,412.93	19,959.71	231,901.41	20,511.52
MISSIONS BUDGET					
28	Conference - World Services	5,000.00	416.50	5,000.00	0.00
29	District Mission Apportionments	2,584.00	215.00	2,584.00	0.00
30	MU Council of Churches	250.00	0.00	250.00	0.00
31	Annual Mission Project	600.00	50.00	600.00	0.00
32	Advanced Specials	547.50	547.50	547.50	0.00
Total Budgeted Missions Expense		8,981.50	1,229.00	8,981.50	0.00

Return Service Requested

X

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HOFFMAN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Worship Time: 9:00 a.m. and 11:15 a.m.
Sunday School: 10:15 a.m.
(937) 698-4401 Website: HoffmanUMC.org
Pastor Robbie Scott

February
2022

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